



City of San Diego
Development Services
Building Development Review
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Building Newsletter 10-3

Tenant Hallways

Interpretations of State and Local Building Codes
2001 California Building Code: Chapter 10
Revision Date: May 2003

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I. Purpose

The development of the means of egress provisions in chapter 10 of the 1997 UBC, which was adopted into the 2001 California Building Code (CBC), introduced the three part means egress system into the Building Code. As apart of that effort, a new means of egress component called a "hallway" was introduced.

The purpose of this Building Newsletter is to better define what a hallway is and how it is to be configured and constructed. Additionally, the following issues will also be addressed:

1. What a hallway is and how it functions in a means of egress system.
2. Methods of allowing bends or changes in direction of a hallway in an office space.
3. Methods of allowing bends or changes in direction of a hallway in other than an office space.
4. Achieving a reasonable separation of exits.

II. Relevant Code Sections

The following code sections from the CBC are relevant to this Building Newsletter:

1. Section 1004.3.3 allows Hallways to be used as an exit-access component unless specifically prohibited based on requirements specified elsewhere in chapter 10. For exit-access design purposes, hallways shall be considered as intervening rooms when determining whether corridor protection may be required.

The Building Development Review Division of the Development Services Department believes that bends in hallways create separate rooms and therefore are not allowed in non-sprinkled buildings.

2. Section 1003.3.3 provides construction requirements for Hallways but is not clear if walls or partitions defining the hallway must be permanently fixed at the base. A wall is permanent and a partition may be disassembled and reassembled.
3. Section 1004.3.3.5 has no restrictions on the size or amount of openings located within walls defining a hallway. However a Hallway can not pass through a room and therefore the wall defining the hallway can not be 100% open to adjoining rooms or areas.
3. Section 1004.2.4 requires exits to be separated by 1/2 the diagonal of the area served.

III. Policies & Interpretations

The City of San Diego has developed the following criteria for uniformly applying the intent of the Hallway

requirements. This purpose of this list is to compliment the requirements published in the Building Code and to achieve uniform application of the Code:

1. Hallways shall be a clearly defined, unobstructed and provide an uninterrupted path of exit travel to an exit or corridor, lobby, reception area, an Exit or the exterior of the building. Openings are permitted in walls defining Hallways so long as the Hallway remains clear, unobstructed and uninterrupted.
2. Hallways may not pass through occupied spaces except foyers, lobbies or reception rooms.
3. Hallways must be defined with walls or partitions of any reasonable height. Walls and partitions that are 6 feet or less in height must be permanently anchored at the base.
4. Interior furnishings such as counters, tables, book-cases, etc. may not be used to define Hallways.
5. Hallways must be a dedicated part of the means of egress system and miscellaneous equipment such as drinking fountains, vending machines, etc. when located within Hallways may not encroach into the required width for the Hallway. Desks, file cabinets, copy machines and similar office furnishings and equipment located in work areas adjoining Hallways shall not be located so as to obstruct a hallway and must be oriented so that workers do not occupy or encroach into the hallway during use.
6. A dropped ceiling need not be provided to define the top of a Hallway.
7. Means of egress illumination must be provided along Hallways when required due to the occupant load served by other requirements in chapter 10 of the CBC.
8. Floors of hallways located within a single tenant space the is primarily used for offices need not be designed for a 100 psf live load.
9. Wall and ceiling finishes located within Hallways are required to comply with the minimum flame spread requirements of CBC Section 804 and "Other Exitways" as noted in Table 8-B.
10. When located within fully sprinkled office buildings, hallways in single tenant offices need not comply with nos. 2,3,4, and 9 above.
11. Hallways may be divided with cross hallway doors that interrupt the path of travel if the direction of door swing complies with Section 1003.3.1.5. Such doors may only include locking hardware when it is not a required part of the means of egress on the locked side or as allowed by Section 1003.3.1.8.

12. When a room or area adjoining a Hallway requires access to two or more exit access doorways or egress paths, only one such means of egress may be provided via a Hallway per Sec. 1004.2.2 EXCEPTION 4.

13. Dead ends more than 20 feet in length are not permitted when two exits are required.

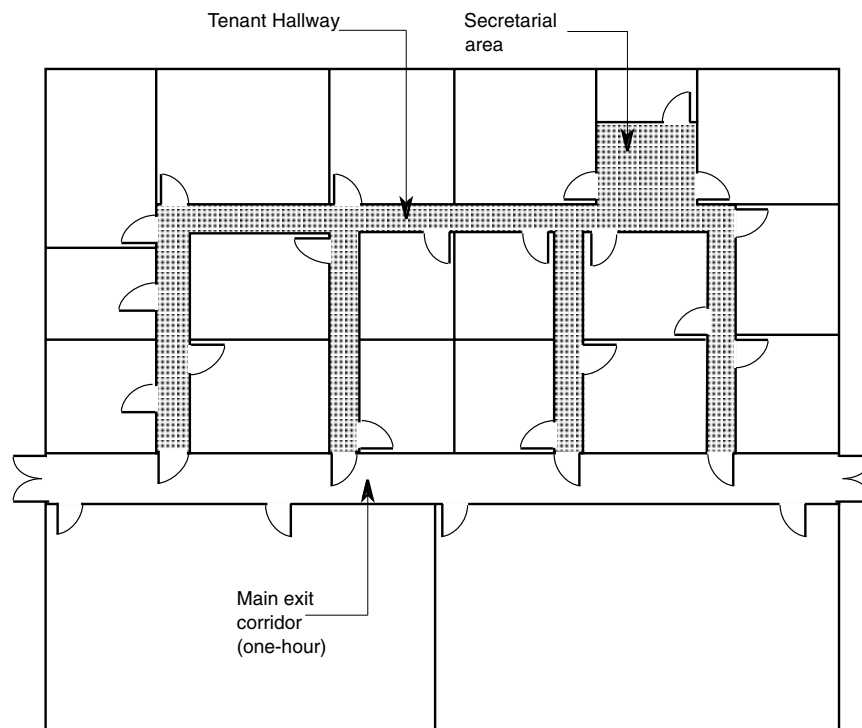
14. The calculated minimum width of a Hallway that is a part of the means of egress system shall maintained as determined by Section 1003.2.3. However, and per Section 1004.3.3.2 the minimum width shall not be less than 44 inches for Hallways serving more than 49 occupants and 36 inches in width an occupant load of 49 or less.

15. Exit access doorways leading from Hallways into other parts of the means of egress system or the exterior of the building must swing in the direction of travel when the total occupant load served by the Hallway 50 or more occupants. Sec. 1003.3.1.5.

16. Hallway located within tenant spaces requiring access to more than one exit access doorway shall be configured such that no branch leading directly to a corridor, lobby, reception area, or other parts of the means of egress system serves more than 30 occupants. The exits access doorways leading out of the tenant space shall located and distributed so as to provide a reasonable separation of exits for the area served. Since each leg has less than 30 people only one exit is required from each leg and a wall could be placed between the legs. We believe having access to two exits is better than only one.

See Section 1004.3.4.3 of the California Building Code for some corridor construction exceptions.

Figure 1/Office building floor plan



NOTE: The tributary occupant load to each portion of the tenant hallway per item 16 must be not more than 29 occupants.